

B2
Ans

crosslinked and extended polymer and can theoretically be as great as 1×10^{17} . Since this polymer is crosslinked in a network, each of the particles into which it has been ground is in effect a single molecule; therefore, the molecular weight of the polymer is equivalent to the weight of an individual polymer particle.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claim 6 as follows:

B3

6. (Amended) The tablet according to claim 4, wherein said particles of a phosphate-binding polymer have an average particle size of no more than 250 μm , with at least 90% being occupied by particles no larger than 300 μm .

Please amend claim 7 as follows:

7. (Amended) The tablet according to claim 1, which further contains crystalline cellulose and/or low substituted hydroxypropyl cellulose.

Please amend claim 9 as follows:

B4

9. (Amended) The tablet according to claim 7, wherein the low substituted hydroxypropyl cellulose has 5.0 - 16.0 wt% substitution by hydroxypropoxyl groups.

(Please amend claim 10 as follows:)

10. (Amended) The tablet according to claim 4, wherein the phosphate-binding polymer is the one described in U.S. Patent No. 5496545 which has been crosslinked in a solvent comprising a mixture of water and acetonitrile.

B4
and

(Please amend claim 11 as follows:)

11. (Amended) The tablet according to any one of claims 3 - 9, wherein the phosphate-binding polymer is one that is obtained by allowing epichlorohydrin to act on polyallylamine in a water/acetonitrile mixed solvent system so that the polyallylamine is crosslinked.

(Please amend claim 12 as follows:)

12. (Amended) The tablet according to claim 4 which further contains a hardened oil.

(Please amend claim 13 as follows:)

13. (Amended) The tablet according to claim 4 which is coated on the surface with a water-soluble film base.

Please enter the following new claims:

16. (New) A tablet comprising the phosphate-binding polymer of claim 1.

B5

17. (New) A tablet comprising the phosphate-binding polymer of claim 2.

18. (New) A tablet comprising the phosphate-binding polymer of claim 3.

19. (New) The tablet according to claim 16, wherein the polymer has a true specific gravity of 1.20-1.22.

20. (New) The tablet according to claim 16 wherein the polymer has an average particle size of no more than 400 μm , with at least 90% of the particles no larger than 500 μm , and with a water content of 1-14%.

21. (New) The tablet according to claim 20 wherein the polymer has an average particle size of no more than 250 μm , with at least 90% of the particles no larger than 300 μm .

22. (New) The tablet according to claim 16 which further contains a component selected from the group consisting of crystalline cellulose, low substituted hydroxypropyl cellulose, and mixtures thereof.

23. (New) The tablet according to claim 22 wherein the content of the component is at least 10% of the weight of

the phosphate-binding polymer.

*B4
and*

24. (New) The tablet according to claim 22 wherein the low substituted hydroxypropyl cellulose has 5.0-16.0 weight % substitution by hydroxy groups.

25. (New) The tablet according to claim 23 wherein the low substituted hydroxypropyl cellulose has 5.0-16.0 weight % substitution by hydroxy groups.

26. (New) The tablet according to claim 16 which further contains a hardened oil.

27. (New) The tablet according to claim 16 which is coated with a water-soluble film base.

28. (New) The tablet according to claim 5 wherein said particles of a phosphate-binding polymer have an average particle size of no more than 250 μm , with at least 90% of the particles being no larger than 300 μm .